

Making Everything Easier!™

Kettlebells

FOR

DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Work all your muscle groups at once
- Improve your strength, endurance, flexibility, agility, and body alignment
- Burn fat, build lean muscle, and achieve core strength
- Boost your metabolism and lose weight

Sarah Lurie, RKC, CSCS

Owner and founder of Iron Core Kettlebell
Strength and Conditioning



Kettlebells For Dummies®

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Kettlebells For Dummies[®] **by Sarah Lurie, RKC, CSCS**



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Kettlebells For Dummies[®]

Published by

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2010926848

ISBN: 978-0-470-59929-7

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Author

In October 2004, [Sarah Lurie](#) founded Iron Core, the first kettlebell training studio in the country to exclusively offer Russian Kettlebell Challenge (RKC) certified kettlebell instruction. Lurie is a former fitness competitor and did traditional weight training for more than ten years before discovering kettlebells. After experiencing a debilitating injury during a workout, Lurie discovered that kettlebell training helped her overcome her injury and get back into a comprehensive fitness routine.

Lurie is a nationally recognized kettlebell expert and has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fitness Magazine*, *Oxygen Magazine*, *Women's Health*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Newsweek*. She has appeared on *E! News*, *The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch*, *Better Homes and Gardens TV*, *Home Shopping Network (HSN)*, and numerous local television fitness programs. Her at-home workout DVDs are sold at retailers nationwide.

Lurie earned a BA in Economics from the University of Arizona and a Masters in Public Administration from San Diego State University. She lives with her husband and two daughters in San Diego.

Dedication

For my husband Jesse, daughters Emma and Grace, and P.A.L. Thanks for teaching me love, patience, persistence, courage, commitment, and dedication (among many other things!). And, of course, Emma, your 3 a.m. wake-up calls made this book possible.

For my dad, who believed in me from the day we drew the logo on the napkin together.

For my mom and Garth for all your encouragement over the years.

Author's Acknowledgments

It all started with the RKC in Minneapolis in June 2004. I will always be grateful to visionaries John DuCane and Pavel Tsatsouline for bringing the training modality and equipment to the United States. Thank you to Brett Jones for being my mentor for the first two-and-a-half (formative) years of my career. Your willingness to share your knowledge and your precise training helped shape my career.

This book would not have been possible without the help of Mark Reichenthal. Thanks for believing in me enough to recommend that I author this book.

The team at Wiley has been an absolute pleasure to work with. Thank you to Tracy Boggier, my acquisitions editor, for all your positive encouragement through the trial writing process. My project editor, Georgette Beatty, is top notch and always provided the support, encouragement, and attention to detail that I needed to

get this project done — thank you. Thank you to my copy editor, Amanda Langferman, and my technical reviewer, Andrea U-Shi Chang, for your hard work — your attention to detail was invaluable to this project.

Over the years, I've been lucky enough to work with some incredibly talented and caring RKC's, most of whom began as clients. I want to thank all the Iron Core RKC's for continually being dedicated to your trade and to our clients. Thank you to Osvaldo Aponte, Cody Bramlett, Charlie Fields, Jessie Shea, Farrah Lin, Elizabeth Sansone, and Denise Holsapple — Iron Core would not continue to exist without all of you. I have to give a special thank-you to Osvaldo Aponte. Os is not only one of the most dedicated and talented instructors I've worked with, but he's also my incredibly patient trainer, who helped me stay in shape during both of my pregnancies and got me back into fighting shape after baby Emma. Os, thank you for taking over when I no longer could be there and for keeping the energy of the gym alive.

I could not have gotten through the process of completing this book without the help and expertise of Rochelle Lewis — thank you for your patience and professionalism.

Along the way, too, I have worked with some incredible clients who have always given me encouragement and support throughout the years. Thank you to Carol Raymond (my very first client), Jackie Harris, Cookie Holsapple, Holly Kennedy, Mike Wasser, Lynne-Sharpe Underwood, and all the others from the original Iron Core crew.

Thank you to Osvaldo Aponte, Erica Buechner, Lynne-Sharpe Underwood, Maddy James, and Mike Byergo for

your patience and professionalism as models for this book.

Thank you to Davia Matson, my makeup artist for the book, for getting rid of my dark circles.

A special thanks to Maurice Roy, who has been my photographer since I started Iron Core. Your photos make the instructions in the book come alive.

Last but certainly not least, I am grateful to the readers of this book. Thank you for purchasing the book and for wanting to learn how to use kettlebells!

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

The biggest question on your mind when you picked up this book may have been, “What exactly are kettlebells?” Simply stated, kettlebells are weights that look like cannonballs with handles; exercising with them combines strength training and cardio training into one workout. Using kettlebells has been hailed in recent years as the most efficient and effective way to train your body for burning tons of fat, getting super strong and lean, and obtaining the ultimate physique. Professional athletes, Hollywood stars, fitness enthusiasts, and novice exercisers have all found in kettlebells what they couldn’t find in other workouts — an exercise program that can be done in half the time of a regular workout routine with twice the results.

I got involved with kettlebells when they were still in their infancy — not many people had heard of Russian kettlebells back in 2003, and very few qualified kettlebell instructors, books, or workout DVDs existed. However, since that time, kettlebell training has grown by leaps and bounds; major fitness organizations recognize it not only as a legitimate training tool but also as one of the best tools available for getting lean and strong. Many qualified trainers now teach students across the country how to use kettlebells. And university research studies are beginning to surface, proving what Russian kettlebell expert Pavel Tsatsouline and his first wave of kettlebell enthusiasts knew all along — kettlebells are the ultimate exercise tool for anyone who’s willing to put in the time to learn how to use them and isn’t afraid of a little sweat.

About This Book

My goal in this book is to use both photos and step-by-step instruction to explain precisely and concisely how to use kettlebells, beginning with the most fundamental principles (such as proper form for your spine and hips). I guide you through a number of basic exercises to help you start using your kettlebell properly, quickly, and safely, and I help you progress to more advanced moves to help you get the absolute most out of your exercise time.

In addition, although I wrote this book with the novice in mind, those of you who have used kettlebells before can find plenty of useful information that you may have missed when you first started using kettlebells — nuances on form and technique that can make a big difference in the results you get from your routine. I also include information on advanced moves to take your workout to the next level and pointers for special audiences who want to use kettlebells, such as young adults, baby boomers, seniors, pregnant women, and others.

And keep in mind that you don't have to read this book from cover to cover; I've organized this book so you can dip into and out of it to find the information you need when you need it.

Conventions Used in This Book

The instructions in this book are meant to be simple, yet comprehensive, to help you establish proper form and technique from the very beginning of your kettlebell practice. With that in mind, I use the following conventions to help you navigate through the information easily:

For most of the fundamental kettlebell exercises, I walk you through the basics of the exercise without using your kettlebell before I explain how to do it using your kettlebell.

I include at least two photos (and in some cases three or more) with the majority of the exercises in this book so you can see what each stage of the exercise looks like.

I include opportunities for you to practice your technique and form after I explain how to do each exercise by providing you with a practice set of reps.

I write all instructions and explanations in nontechnical terms so that you aren't bogged down by unfamiliar language; whenever necessary, I use *italics* to point out new terms or add emphasis.

I present step-by-step instructions in **boldface** to help you easily identify what you need to know to properly execute the exercise.

Any extra explanatory text that helps you get a better handle on a particular step appears in roman text after the boldface step.

I use monofont to make Web sites stand out.

When this book was printed, some Web addresses may have needed to break across two lines of text.

If that happened, rest assured that I haven't put in any extra characters (such as hyphens) to indicate the break. So, when using one of these Web addresses, just type in exactly what you see in this book, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist.

What You're Not to Read

This book is packed full of detailed information that explains how to use kettlebells, and it's based on my experience of teaching new students how to use kettlebells for the first time. I certainly won't object if you read this book from cover to cover, but if necessary, you can safely skip anything marked with an Advanced Stuff icon; you can also skip sidebars (in shaded gray boxes). These items contain interesting information but aren't crucial to understanding how to use kettlebells.

Foolish Assumptions

As I wrote this book, I made a few assumptions about you. Basically, I assumed the following:

You're a novice when it comes to kettlebells. In other words, you've either heard of or read about kettlebells and may have watched clips of other people using them, but either have never touched a kettlebell or recently bought one and don't know what to do with it.

If you have used kettlebells and are self-taught, you may be lacking in some areas of your form and

technique. For you, the instructions I present in this book will provide clarification on what you already know — and will undoubtedly make a big difference in the results you get from your kettlebell routine.

You possess little fitness experience and are looking for a workout routine that's fun and challenging and that gets results; oh, and you aren't afraid of elevating your heart rate and working your muscles!

How This Book Is Organized

Kettlebells For Dummies is organized into five parts with each part offering you detailed information on specific topics related to kettlebells. The following sections explain what each part covers.

Part I: Gearing Up for a Kettlebell Workout

Part I gives you an overview of kettlebell training and explains how it differs from traditional fitness programs. It provides information on the benefits of kettlebell training, the reasons why it works, and essential safety considerations you need to take before and during your workouts. Knowing what size kettlebell to start with and how to pick the right quality kettlebell is a subject that many newbies have trouble with, so I dedicate an entire chapter to helping you pick the right kettlebell and set up

a safe and effective home gym. In addition, Part I details essential hip, spine, and breathing techniques to get you moving and using your kettlebell properly, and it offers warm-up and cool-down options to help you start and finish your workouts safely.

Part II: Beginning with Basic Kettlebell Moves

Part II is one of the most important parts of the book because it shows you how to build the foundation for your entire kettlebell practice. It's full of step-by-step instructions that take you through the fundamental kettlebell exercises, like the swing and the Turkish get-up. For each exercise, you find valuable information on how to fix your form or technique if you're having trouble with the exercise. You also find some basic workout routines that allow you to start practicing right away with a cohesive workout program (after you master the basics, of course!).

Part III: Mastering Advanced Kettlebell Moves

When you're ready to kick your kettlebell workouts up a notch, take a look at Part III; it offers intermediate and advanced moves to help you keep your workout challenging. In addition, it covers some great abdominal-specific exercises that work your core even more than the advanced full-body kettlebell exercises do. Be forewarned, though, this part contains five ultimate kettlebell exercises that will take your training to a whole

new level — with a little time and patience, of course! To help you put the exercises I cover in this part together into an effective (and challenging) workout routine, I offer a few workout options for you to try out at the end of this part.

Part IV: Using Kettlebells in Special Situations

Over the years, I've been lucky enough to work with a variety of individuals at different life stages and fitness levels. Whether you're a young adult, a baby boomer or senior, a pregnant woman, an athlete, or someone who's overweight or rehabbing from an injury, you find what you need to know in this part to adapt your kettlebell workout to your particular situation. Kettlebells are a highly adaptable tool if they're used correctly. In this part, I use a conservative approach to help you incorporate a few kettlebell exercises into your specific workout routine, but, as you gain confidence with kettlebells, you'll find that the rest of this book is just as helpful as this particular part.

Part V: The Part of Tens

A signature of *For Dummies* books, the Part of Tens contains lists of ten things you may want to know about kettlebells. Chapter 18 details ten ways you can set and meet your kettlebell fitness goals, and Chapter 19 points out ten tips for working with a kettlebell trainer. The appendix lists resources to help you find anything and everything you may need related to kettlebells, including a list of certified trainers near you.

Icons Used in This Book

The icons in this book are true to *For Dummies* style and point out especially useful tidbits of information. Here's a list of the icons I use in this book:



This icon points out important information that you should take away from this book and apply to every kettlebell workout you do.



This icon points out nuances and variations on form and technique that can help make the exercises easier.



This icon alerts you to some essential information on safe form and technique. Read the information attached to this icon so you don't hurt yourself!



If you master a basic exercise and feel ready to progress, use the information highlighted with this icon to guide you in doing more challenging variations.

Where to Go from Here

If you're a beginner and just want to dive right in, flip to Chapter 2 to take note of some important safety considerations you need to follow, Chapter 3 to choose